

Georgia Department of Human Resources

DIVISION OF AGING SERVICES

The Division of Aging Services administers a statewide system of services for older Georgians and adults with disabilities. These programs offer maximum independence and dignity for participants, especially the most vulnerable. The division provides in-home services to maintain independence; public education and outreach services; health promotion services; senior employment services and an ombudsman program for Georgians in long-term care. Beginning in FY 2005, the division will be responsible for investigation and protective services for vulnerable adults.

The division's FY 2005 budget is \$108.7 million, including \$60.7 million in state funds.

The **Community Care Services Program (CCSP)** helps Medicaid-eligible individuals who cannot perform activities of daily living to continue living in their homes and communities and avoid placement in a nursing home. In FY 2003, Georgia's CCSP served 14,687 people and did so at a per-person cost that is among the lowest of southeastern states. The program spent \$5,836 on each consumer. The average cost of a nursing home placement was \$22,151. This means that taxpayers saved \$16,315 for each CCSP client who avoided institutional placement.

In FY 2003:

- 593 Georgians received **adult day health services**. This includes nursing care, personal care, occupational, speech and physical therapy, dietary services, and social work.
- 2,575 received **alternative living services**. These services are provided in state-licensed residences with 24-hour supervision and support services for people who cannot remain in their homes.
- 6,663 persons received **emergency response services**. These services provide two-way electronic communication between a monitoring service and an isolated individual.
- 2,992 consumers received **home-delivered meals**.
- 3,210 individuals received skilled **home health services and social services** provided by a home health agency.
- 11,509 individuals received **personal support services** such as light housekeeping, basic personal care and caregiver relief.
- 15 people received **out-of-home respite care**, offering temporary relief for caregivers who have full-time responsibility for the care of a frail or disabled person.

The **Home and Community-Based Services Program (HCBS)** is available to elderly people age 60 and older. It provides supports to older Georgians so that they may remain independent and self-sufficient.

In FY 2003, 37,554 seniors received HCBS services. This includes:

- **Congregate and home-delivered meals** are provided to groups in settings such as senior centers, and to individuals who are temporarily or permanently homebound. The meals meet at least one-third of a person's recommended daily nutritional requirement. The group meals also provide opportunities for adult education, socializing and recreation. In FY 2003, a total of 16,598 individuals received home delivered meals and 14,013 were served in senior centers.
- **Health Promotion and Disease Prevention** services (nutrition screening, counseling, education and physical fitness programs) aimed at reducing/avoiding disabilities from chronic disease are provided by each Area Agency on Aging.
- **Homemaker/chore services** helped 4,214 people to stay in their homes by providing helpers who performed routine household tasks.

The **National Family Caregiver Support Program** (NFCSP) supports family caregivers as its targeted client group rather than care receivers. This program is available to family caregivers, age 18 and older, of persons with Alzheimer's and other dementias as well as persons caring for frail, older adults with chronic health conditions. In FY 2003, a total of 1,930 family caregivers received adult day care services and 1,989 family caregivers received temporary relief from their caregiving responsibilities through respite services provided by Georgia's aging network.

The **Wellness Program** is aimed at increasing the ability of older adults to perform everyday activities and remain living in their own homes. Activities are focused on health promotion and disease prevention. Services are designed to improve health status, increase functional abilities, avoid or delay problems caused by chronic diseases and enhance quality of life. In FY 2003 the Wellness Program served a total of 18,907 clients.

Effective July 1, 2004, the Division of Aging Services will be responsible for **Adult Protective Services (APS)**. APS serves persons over age 65 and disabled persons over age 18 who do not reside in a long-term care facility. Services are provided in all 159 counties. The program investigates reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation and provides intervention to reduce the risk of further maltreatment. Program staff find another residence for the abused person; arrange for medical assistance; educate caregivers as to proper care; find a senior center to provide day services; and, if necessary get law enforcement to intervene. In FY 2003, a monthly average of 4,880 adults received APS services.

The **Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program** seeks resolution of problems and advocates for the rights residents of long-term care facilities with the goal of enhancing the quality of life and care of residents. In FY 2003, the Ombudsman program visited residents in nursing homes and personal care homes and provided them with information and education. The program worked to resolve 8,299 complaints. It resolved 94% of complaints to the complainant's satisfaction.

The **Elderly Legal Assistance Program (ELAP)** promotes prevention of costly legal problems through the provision of legal information and education to seniors 60 and over in a variety of areas of civil law. Representation is provided when necessary. ELAP served

30,440 seniors in FY 2003. Seniors also received brief legal assistance from the division's partner, **the Georgia Senior Legal Hotline.**

The **GeorgiaCares Program** is a private-public partnership that consists of: Georgia's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), the Senior Medicare Patrol and a special initiative to provide Medicare beneficiaries with access to all available low-cost prescription medication programs. More than 450 trained volunteer counselors provide information on Medicare, Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Programs, Long-Term Care Insurance, Medicare Supplemental Insurance (Medigap), Medicare Savings Programs and Low Cost Prescription Assistance Programs. They also help Medicare beneficiaries sort through complicated Medicare issues and educate them on Medicare fraud, error and abuse. Since July 2002, GeorgiaCares has saved Medicare beneficiaries over \$54 million in health-related costs.

The **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)** provides part-time community service assignments for low-income people 55 and older and helps them obtain employment. In FY 2003, 92% of participants had incomes below the federal poverty level; 82% were over age 60; and 36% were over age 70.

Looking to the future

The aging of Georgia's population is one of the most significant trends affecting our state today. By 2011, the first baby boomers – the generation born between 1946 and 1964 – will celebrate their 65th birthdays. Georgia's population aged 60 and older is expected to increase 81.6 percent between 1990 and 2010. Those 85 and older are by far the fastest growing age group; they will increase by 264.9% percent by 2010.

This growth in the elderly population is placing greater demands on state government. To meet these challenges, the Division of Aging Services continues to strengthen its public-private partnerships with an array of community-based service agencies. By focusing on the outcomes of these services and streamlining program operations, the division makes sure that the services are cost-effective and that they respond to the needs of elderly and disabled Georgians.